

Synopsis



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The LD 50 Philosophy Test

Elizabeth Shaffer

This test is not life-threatening to anything except self-satisfaction or complacency. The methodology is simple. I will administer questions until at least half of a normal person's self-satisfaction or complacency is lethally exposed to the realities of existence. Seeing no evil and hearing no evil does not disprove its existence or right its wrongs. Sometimes it is not answers we need to be given so much as questions. Answers are easy, or at least often seem easy, and many people just want to be given the easy, or "right" answer. But some questions aren't that easy. Some aren't made to be answered. Some have no "right" answer, or have difficult answers. These are usually the questions that we most need to ask, and the ones that I will ask. May this test be kinder to your self-esteem than to your complacency. Look carefully. Think carefully. And hopefully with your informed consent, let me proceed.

Who are you?

Why is the color of a person's skin so important to some people?

If we study animals psychologically to extrapolate to humans, why is it considered silly to study human behavior and extrapolate to animals? If so is similarity a "one-way" street?

If the price of knowledge is cutting open a living, sentient being to watch its brain and organs function while it's still alive, then what is the price of love?

Why have so many wars been fought in the name of religions whose prime directives are supposed to be peace and love? And in the battle between harsh words and physical violence, which exacts a higher price in pain?

Is abortion right with a confirmed diagnosis of Tay Sachs Syndrome, a degenerative disease that develops into more and more

excruciating agony for the child until death around age three? And which is more merciful to those in pain: life or death?

Why is death, even if it is an end of everything, viewed negatively in a world where few people seem to be happy or really treasure life?

What is death?

What is the meaning of life?

If it has been proved that some sort of love or affection is necessary to human life, why isn't this accepted for higher animal life despite proof with chimpanzee infants that they prefer mother-comfort to food?

How long do you really want to live?

Why do people who eat meat say they couldn't kill an animal, when, by causal contribution, they already have? And what makes the one species on a planet that most degrades the environment of their planet think that they are the most superior species? Do you know that at the present rate of consumption that all the available oil reserves and oil supplies will be gone by the year 2050? And why do so many Americans living in a country with the highest standard in the world want to blame the "economic problems" we're experiencing on countries where people are so desperate for paying work that they'll work for a fraction of the pay we'll accept for the same job? And, if so, and if we really want the work and pay to stay at home, why are so many of those same people so eager to buy the cheapest imported products that they can find? Why is something you can throw away more popular than something you can re-use?

Is there a "Higher Being?" Why would God create man and woman if there wasn't both?

Which is better; a heterosexual relationship, or a loving relationship with anyone?

Could you forgive the rapist/murderer of your only daughter?

If almost 80% of the rapes committed in this country are of older, unattractive or unattractively dressed women, or young children, why do so many people assume that the man is just "sexually attracted" enough to them to rape them? Should a rapist be required to wear a condom?

Have you had "safe sex" lately?

What is "safe sex?"

Why do humans conceive of themselves as having a God-given soul yet view other creatures that were supposedly created by the same God as having no soul?

If the universe conceived life here and has billions of stars capable of life-supporting planets, what basis would we have for not supposing that some of them might have lifeforms that are technologically superior to us? And, if so, what argument would we have that they should not use us for research? Do we have the right to justify using chimpanzees in brain research so that we can extrapolate to humans if the similarities that we're testing give rise to the reasons that we can't use humans in these tests because of ethical considerations?

How are we, as a species, to decide which species are valuable and which are not? Is value ever objective?

What do you say to a child crying because the only person who ever supposedly loved them just beat them black and blue?

Do you really know how much it takes to get past the pain of childhood sexual abuse? (If you find out let me know.)

Why are portrayals of brutal murder and mutilation one of our hottest selling categories of "entertainment?"

Why is it hard for some people, like me, to stand up and state an opinion for fear that someone might not like me or might laugh at

me? (And to those who doubt this of me, it is true, despite appearances. We all have fears that we "overcome" by compensating.)

Would we have light without darkness?

Why are women drivers looked on as inferior by some people when men cause 76% of the car accidents in this country?

Has your dog ever bit you because his boss yelled at him at work? (PS: I know the owner of one working dog who claimed his did.)

Do we have the right (and is it really necessary) to force feed dogs toxic drain cleaner in experiments designed to see just how much drain cleaner it takes to kill 50% of a sample of 100 dogs? (This is one form of the real LD 50 test. One tested reported that the reason they don't like to use anesthesia with this experiment is that the relief from pain might affect mortality time.) And to carry man's inhumanity to our own species:

Have you ever seen a child after they've been intentionally burned with cigarettes as punishment for misbehaving?

But some questions are easier: Does it really make sense to use our richer agricultural land to feed large amounts of livestock for human consumption when the same amount of land could feed twice as many humans more healthily if we ate the corn and 'veggies? Though I admit that some land the supports livestock will not support crops this is far from all cases.) And do you know that while some small farmers allow their chickens to live almost as freely as in the wild but with the benefit of better shelter, some large scale chicken farmers actually de-beak their chickens to reduce pecking deaths in overcrowded coops?

But on a lighter note: Why do hot dogs come in ten count packs and hot dog buns in eight count packages?

And if you write a book on how to fail, and it fails, was it a success?

One last thought; I know why people

die from cancer, but why is my friend alive and healthy six years after four doctors told her that her cancer was terminal and that she had only six months to live? Why does most research on cancer focus on seeing why it kills animals rather than why it doesn't kill some people? And, as a friend asked, though someone with cancer who was generous would consent to experimental treatment to it figuring that if it didn't help them that the knowledge gained might help others, would that same person volunteer to be given cancer like a laboratory animal so that they could experiment with treatments on him to find a cure for cancer?

I'm sure that you're sick of these questions by now. I'm certainly tired of asking them. But you've now finished this LD 50's 50 questions. May your conscience and soul rest in peace, more peace than many creatures and humans are able to this night. And if anyone still thinks that they have all the answers please submit them to next year's Synapse. I, and a lot of other people, would be anxious to hear them.



On Down the Line

Curt Fekety

Sooty coal black
 Flying through the darkness
 On midnight oil
 Burning at both ends
 In a race against time
 Flashing steel pounding at the ties.
 Clanging, banging, roaring
 Falling apart, bit by bit,
 Picking up new parts along the way
 Pushing the moon ahead
 Forcing the night-mists to part
 Making its way
 Anyway it can
 So long as it keeps going
 On down the line
 Hobos and stowaways
 Kicked off, left behind,
 Methodically and coldly
 Not stopping to wonder
 That one of these stowaways
 Of little worth now
 Might have ridden first class
 Yesterday or tomorrow.
 There's just one passenger aboard
 The engineer, all dressed in black
 For this train, you see, is me
 My soul stretched on the track.
 Though I can't remember boarding
 This astral train of mine
 But we keep each other going
 On down the line

Today It Snowed

Tracey Bellesfield

Today it snowed
and I wanted to share it with you.
But you were many miles away
so nothing was shared.

As the snow fell it danced on my face
ever so gently like your touch;
it stuck on my eyelashes and melted on my lips,
the same lips that long to kiss you.
But you were many miles away
so no lips were kissed.

Thoughts raced in my head of us laughing
in the newly fallen snow
as you playfully chased me.
But you were many miles away
so no laughter was heard.

And as I thought of you being
so distant from where I am,
I realized that all of the things
I had envisioned us doing actually did happen.
There was kissing
and there was laughter
and we shared it all.
You had been with me all the time.
You had been with me in my heart.

Free Will

Brian Nicol
Clarion University

"Do human beings have free will?" The position I like the best concerning this question is that of William James. He felt that the decision whether to believe in free will is personal. Each person must decide for herself or himself how the belief meshes with his own experiences, making them, as James says, "more satisfactory."

But as for the meaning of the question itself, what is meant by the word "free"? Is it freedom from control outside yourself or is it total freedom—even from yourself? Or do your own moral convictions, opinions, habits, etc., dictate your actions, thoughts, and decisions? Is the question whether we have freedom to control, or freedom from control? The question "Do humans have free will?" is difficult to understand, let alone answer.

Freedom is more than freedom of action. If we have freedom of action, we must have freedom of thought as well. If something were controlling our thoughts, our actions would not be free. Our actions are dictated by our thoughts, so if our thoughts were not free, our actions would be determined.

Evolution and God

Chris McGann

Before I start this discussion of evolution, I want to say that I do believe in a god. The question of which god is not significant to the argument. I think that different religions are simply different ways of looking at the same God. If you want to discuss theology farther, I suggest that you take Dr. Timko's philosophy of religion course.

Most religions have a story about how their god created the universe. There are various stories, but the fact that "God" created the universe and everything in it. This theory was nearly universal until the 1850s when Darwin proposed the theory of evolution in his book, On the Origin of the Species. There is currently a huge controversy over which of these is correct. I propose that the two can, and should exist side by side since one is dependant on the other. This may seem strange and, to some extent, heretical, but I don't really care.

People who believe in the traditional "God created the universe" theory have created their own branch of science known as Creationism. Unfortunately, their hypothesis cannot be tested by science. That makes it an invalid science. Looking at this objectively, however, one must understand that one cannot test for God. It just doesn't work. Since I am not a total atheist, I must still give this idea some consideration.

On the other hand, biologists are making evolution seem more valid all the time through research in genetics. This whole theory denies that God, whoever that may be, had any role in the creation of all this. The universe runs too amazingly perfect to have been an accident.

Since I cannot fully accept either theory, I was forced to come up with my own idea. Developing a hypothesis about how the universe

works may seem like a task that would take a lot of time to ponder, so I thought about it during boring math classes (That's probably why I nearly failed trigonometry).

I believe that God created science. When God created the universe by means of the Big Bang, He created all of the physical laws that govern the universe. Therefore, it is possible that Earth and life itself is a natural phenomenon. Since God created science, He created the universe using science like a mason creates a wall with bricks and mortar.

This concept may seem to confuse most people, but if you think about it, the idea makes sense. Evolution is the tool that God used to create life just like I am using a computer to write this article.

Scientists have created DNA molecules in a laboratory from elements that may have existed in the prehistoric atmosphere. Therefore, it is possible that life spontaneously evolved from a freak chemical reaction.

But why do chemicals react like they do? Why does a specific combination of oxygen, nitrogen, hydrogen, and carbon produce the building blocks of life? What force caused the first DNA to be created?

It's my opinion that some higher consciousness must have created the laws of the universe that scientists stay up late nights trying to discover. (Then some insane philosopher comes along and says "That's not right.")

That is where the idea that God created science comes in. If God is in fact the force that causes the universe to act as it should, He must have created the laws that govern its existence.

So the universe was created by a higher consciousness (i.e. God). Humans create things all the time but only God is powerful enough to

create something like the universe.

If this all seems revolutionary, it should. Several centuries ago, the idea that the Earth is a sphere was not universally accepted even though it was the truth and could be proven. (Look at a partial lunar eclipse; only a sphere would cast a circular shadow.)

I don't intend that this be considered the ultimate answer. This should only be thought of as another in a series of reasons why we are here. We can never hope to find the truth if we reject new ideas.

Clouds

Kim Miller

Those clouds golden and shining — a vehicle for angels if angels do exist. If not a vehicle for angels than certainly a vehicle for my thoughts. Looking to them I am no longer singular, nor have I ever been. Or singular only in this duality that I appreciate. This handsome ability to understand clouds shall let me slide through life unaware that I am not, in fact, an angel.

Another Freudian Slip

Cathleen Haggerty

It all started with the dream...
I never really put much faith into it, until
I noticed a pattern...
At first they didn't have faces, but
lately they do...
In reality, they would never do that...
Maybe 'associates' but never, ever the good
ones...
To know each other with such intensity would
kill what precious little we have
to begin with...
I never thought about it until the
faces started to appear...
I was conscious the whole time...
It could never happen in the waking-world...
I hope it won't...
It would destroy him...
and send me to the 'romper room'...
Right back to the place that started the chaos
(figuratively speaking)...
He would never speak to me again...
My eyes could never meet theirs...
My life, my soul; neither would ever reach
deep enough...
Both stuck, cut, smashed, and crushed
in the mantle...
All this...
and it started with a dream...

The History and Philosophy of the Salem Witch Trials

Kerry Jones

One of the most interesting phenomena to occur in the history of the United States was the Salem Witch Trials, which lasted from 1692 until 1693. The question that ultimately and initially arises when looking back on this brief but famous time is: "Were there really witches in Salem?" At least twenty people, three-fourths of whom were women, were executed between May and late September of 1692. Hundreds more men and women were imprisoned. If we are to assume, and as most historians will suggest, that these people were not witches, how did such an accusation against them arise? To answer this question, we must examine both the history and the philosophy behind the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

The Puritans first began to arrive in the Massachusetts Colony around 1630. One of the first philosophers we studied in class was John Winthrop and his essay, "A Modell of Christian Charity," which was written on the Puritan flagship "Arabella" as he sailed for the new land (Hollinger 6). For the Puritans, the Massachusetts Bay Colony would represent not only a land where they would be able to practice their religion without fear of condemnation or prosecution, but the situation itself was looked upon as entering into a covenant with God. The Puritans viewed themselves as a culmination of Christianity, because they were about to enter into a relationship with God that other Christians were not. The fact that Winthrop's essay was written while both he and the rest of the Puritans were at sea was the first part of that covenant. Winthrop had outlined a series of "articles" by which the Puritans were to live their lives after arriving in the new land. Actually arriving in the Colony (which was no small feat during this time period) would be symbolic

of God agreeing to the way in which the Puritans were to live and thus seal the covenant: "Now if the Lord shall please to hear vs, and bring vs in peace to the place we desire, then hath he ratified this Covenant and sealed our Commision [and] will expect a strikt performance of the Articles...but if wee haue propounded, and dissembling with our God, shall fall to embrace this present world and prosecute vs and be revenged of such a periured people and make vs knowe the price of the breache of such a Covenant" (Winthrop 15). These words would be of utmost importance thirty years later.

The Puritans, while seeking religious asylum themselves, did not advocate religious freedom—they hated Baptists, Quakers, and Catholics, and were not at all interested in converting the Indians. The Puritans were seeking religious freedom for themselves, and what they ultimately wanted was a society where everyone thought the same way. Religious dissenters or freethinkers, such as Anne Hutchinson and Roger Williams, were banished from the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Roger Williams fled to Rhode Island in 1636. Not only had he been encouraging a final break from the Church of England, but he also challenged the legality of the Bay Colony charter, which he condemned for taking land away from the Indians without fair compensation (Baily 31). Hutchinson claimed that living a holy life did not guarantee one salvation, and that one was saved only if the Holy Spirit assured one personally and directly. She was accused of antinomianism and banished in 1638, after which sought the benefits of Rhode Island.

Had Williams and Hutchinson lived in Salem Village in 1692, it is almost certain that

their fate would have been far worse than banishment. Salem Village, now Danvers, is where the hysteria of 1692 occurred, and is not to be confused with Salem Town, which was larger and neighbored the village. For many years, Salem Village was under the jurisdiction of Salem Town, and the residents of Salem Village were required to attend church services and meetings in the Town, although the travelling distance for many people was more than ten miles. Salem Village finally received permission from the Town and the Colony's General Court to build a meetinghouse and hired a minister in 1672 (Guiley 292).

The Rev. Samuel Parris returned to Massachusetts from Barbados around 1687 or 1688, and became Salem Village's new minister in 1689. Members of the Village were still discontent with their religious situation, and were disputing amongst themselves over who had the power to select ministers. The community remained divided between those who believed in maintaining ties with Salem Town and those who believed in the Village's legal autonomy. Parris supported the later, and ultimately, the Village remained divided between those who supported Parris and those who did not (Guiley 292).

Parris brought to Salem Village his wife, his nine-year-old daughter Betty, his eleven-year-old niece, Abigail Williams, and a slave couple, Tituba and John Indian. During bad weather, Tituba began telling the young girls and their friends stories of voodoo and witchcraft from her native Barbados (Guiley 293).

The fear of witchcraft was nothing new to the people of Salem Village and Massachusetts Bay. The obsession with and fear of witches date far back into English and European history. One of the most influential works dealing with the subject of witches, witchcraft, and the Devil was the Malleus Maleficarum, which was published by Heinrich Kramer and Jacob Sprenger in 1486. Included in this work

is the statement that "all witchcraft comes from carnal lust, which is in women insatiable" (Guiley 374). Such a theory carried itself through the ages in religious teachings and sermons. Two hundred years after the Malleus Maleficarum was published, New England women were the property of their fathers, husbands, or brothers. The only expectation these women were expected to live up to was that of the docile, obedient, and uncomplaining "helpmeet" for men. These women were commonly referred to as "the daughters of Eve," in the sense that they were the moral and intellectual inferiors of men, sexually depraved, continually dissatisfied, and easily tempted by Satan (Pelka 7). Because of this, women would be the main target of the accusers. The belief was that witches were old women or "hags," ugly, and crotchety.

While the hysteria that occurred in Salem was the most intense and furious of the witchcraft cases in Colonial America, other instances of "witches" were strewn throughout the colonies. The first hanging of a convicted witch occurred in 1647 in Connecticut. Prior to the hysteria of 1692, a woman by the name of Goodwife Glover was hung as a witch in Boston. It was said she had been causing young children to have "fits" (Watson 177).

But what was going wrong in Salem? Not only was there a division among the community of Salem itself, but Massachusetts Bay had its 1629 charter revoked in 1685. There were many legal problems as a result of this, but more importantly, the Puritans felt that the wrath of God as described by Winthrop was upon them. The colonists and people of Salem began to believe that every "pretty transgression and factionalism of the colonists" was a sin against the covenant that had been established with God (Guiley 294). Rev. Parris seems to have had a personal penchant for the subject of witchcraft, and his speeches against it, along with the published sermons of Cotton Mather,

convinced the villagers that "evil walked among them and must be rooted at all cost" (Guiley 294).

Meanwhile, Tituba continued telling stories to a small group of interested but impressionable young girls. In January, 1692, Betty Parris began having convulsions. The rest of the girls soon picked up the trend. What may have initially begun as nightmares fueled by guilt or a bit of fun soon began to have serious ramifications. News of what was happening spread throughout the village, inspiring both excitement and fear amongst the villagers. The leader of the girls was Ann Putnam, and it has been suggested that the "possessions caused by witches" developed into a means of revenge against another family, the Porters. Many of the "witches" Ann would name have some kind of affiliation with this family (Watson 124).

By the time the last executions occurred in September of 1692, twenty people were dead and similar outbreaks had occurred in the neighboring villages of Beverly, Lynn, Reading, West Peabody, Amesbury, Billerica, Marblehead, Boston, and Charlestown, including a major outbreak in Andover (Booth 207). On May 9, 1693, the colony's Superior Court held session for witchcraft trials for the last time; all the accused were acquitted. However, twenty people were still dead. In 1703 the Massachusetts colonial legislature began granting retroactive amnesties to both the people who were convicted and to those who were executed. In 1706, the ringleader of the girls, Ann Putnam, issued a statement retracting her actions during 1692-93 and begged for forgiveness. Prior to all of this, the Puritan clergy called for an Official Day of Humiliation on January 14, 1697, during which those involved in the trials and accusations were asked to fast and beg for public apology (Guiley 299).

Who is to blame for this tragedy? The ages of the girls involved ranged from nine years of age to seventeen. If anything, they can

be excused on the basis of feelings of mischief, fun, guilt, fear, and manipulation (perhaps) by those close to them. It has also been suggested that the "arm twisting" and "skin prickling" that they suffered from was the result of a hallucinogenic fungus in bad rye that was used to make bread (Watson 121). What then are we to make of the adults? What are we to make of the philosophical thinking behind this incident?

Most of the accused, three-fourths, were women. Most of them were old women, widows, and social outcasts. Coupled with this is the fact that many were engaged in business, did not attend church (usually for reasons of health), or were simply nasty old women. Their general age was usually over forty and many of them, especially the widowed, neither had sons or brothers and stood to inherit property of some sort (Shapiro 67). The men who were accused were usually only guilty of being married to an accused woman.

"Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft," Cotton Mather preached to Salem Village in 1692 (Watson 124). Although Massachusetts Bay had its charter restored in May of 1692, the internal problems the community was experiencing threatened to pull the community apart. The term "rebellion" applied to the freethinkers and those who sought liberty and independence as opposed to order and community. The original loss of the charter was also a "loss with God." Despite the underhanded current that ran through the hysteria (it became quite easy to solve a dispute with a neighbor—all one needed to do was convulse and pretend they saw a familiar sitting on this person's shoulder when enough people were around), the accusations of witchcraft inspired intense fear throughout the community. This fear could be used as an attempt to restore community, conventional ideal, and reinforce the importance of institutions that men such as Winthrop and Mather saw as a necessity for not only the survival of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, but as a neces-

sity to win back the favor of God. Intellectually, the fear of witches (and I do not doubt that preachers such as Samuel Parris and Cotton Mather actually believed in them) could have been seen as a way to restore the original foundation of the colonies. It was those people cut out of the mold of Roger Williams and Anne Hutchinson they sought to dispel once and for all—not by mere banishment, but by imprisonment and execution. Yet as the hysteria came to a close and the people of Salem began to awaken from their fog, what had been done posed another problem. By the late 1690s, the people of Salem Village feared that what had been done would place their covenant with God in dire straits once again—and thus began the statements of retraction and omissions of guilt, coupled with fasting, public apology, and prayer. The nature of what those who were involved learned from the incident is best stated by Rev. John Hale, who wrote in his Modest Inquiry into the Nature of Witchcraft (1697): “Such was the darkness of that day, the tortures and lamentations of the afflicted, and the power of the former precedents, that we walk in the clouds, and could not see our way.”

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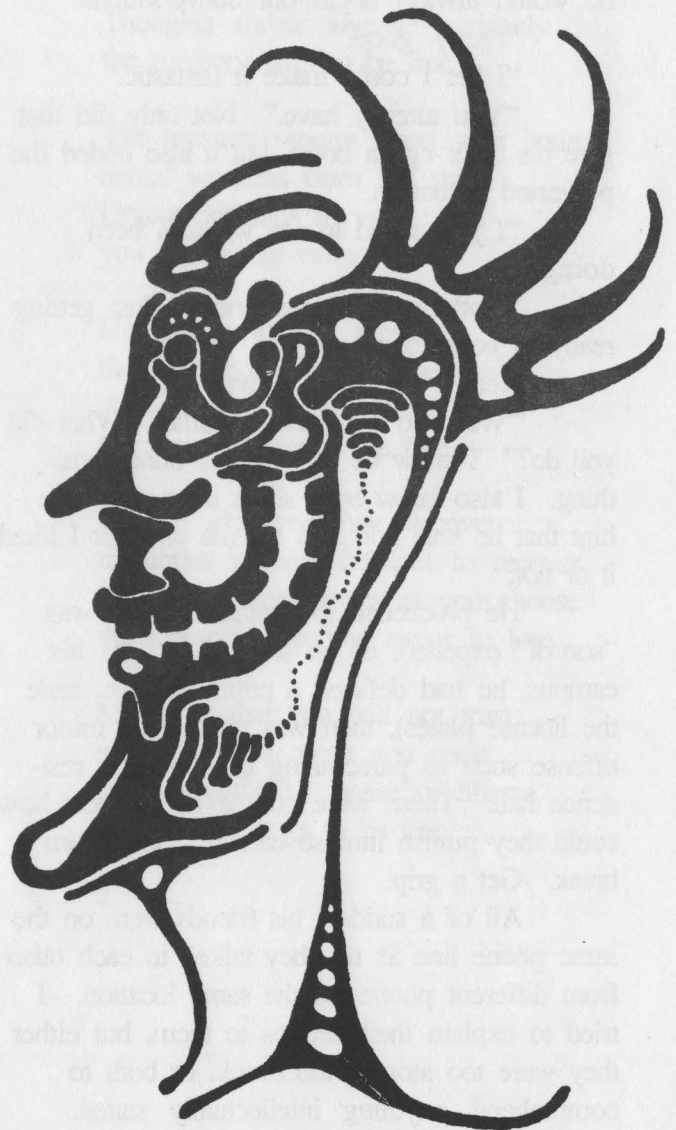
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B.A.B.

Cathleen Haggerty

As the song goes, "It had to be you." Or rather it had to be him. Out of all the people from high school that would call me, it had to be my old flame. I missed him, but I never wanted to hear from him or about him ever again. But he called.

"Hey babe, how's your sex life?" is how he would always begin our conversations.

"Pretty good."

"I bet I could make it fantastic."

"You already have." Not only did that give his male ego a boost, but it also ended the perverted situation.

"I just called to see whatcha been doing."

"Nothing much right now. Just getting ready to go back to school."

Really. Too bad I can't."

"What do you mean? (pause) What did you do?" I knew he had to have done something. I also knew by a slight intonation of a hint that he was going to tell me whether I liked it or not.

He proceeded to explain how he was "sort-of" expelled, or on suspension. At his campus, he had defaced a police car (i.e. stole the license plates), then was cited for a minor offense such as parachuting off a female residence hall. These were only minor crimes; how could they punish him so harshly? Give him a break. Get a grip.

All of a sudden, his friends were on the same phone line as us; they talked to each other from different phones at the same location. -I tried to explain their actions to them, but either they were too stoned, too drunk, or both to comprehend anything intellectually stated.

By this time, it was approximately 12 midnight, and I had to get up for work EARLY the next morning. Let me go to

sleep...PLEASE.

In short, not to dwell on any more "ifs" from the past, this is the way the conversation proceeded for the next hour and a half: his friends and him talked from the same house on different extensions. Then he shocked the hell out of me; he turned emotional.

"I never forgot you, babe."

"I never forgot you either." I didn't feel right in calling him 'babe' or 'hon.' Those names are reserved for the new man in my life. Or no man in my life. This guy was not mine...I could not call him by possessive pet names. And likewise, I was not his.

"I love you."

"You're drunk."

Silence. He must have really felt something. He admitted to me once that the only times he would ever be speechless was when he felt a sinking feeling of over-emotion in his chest. The same thing happens to me. Right then I practically exploded.

"That hurt."

"Admit it. Aren't you flagged?"

"Yes, I admit it, but I love you. Always will." So will I buddy...seriously.

"Ya' still there?"

"Yes, I'm here. I'm just tired, that's all." Please God. Please don't let it go any further. NO. Please!

"We had good times together."

"I know. You know, you will always hold a special little spot in my heart. You always have, and you always will." This is true. We experienced a lot of emotions together. Many of those for the first time. I can't forget, no matter how hard I try. Damn memories. They ruin everything...even when you're trying to make new ones.

"Do you really mean that, babe?"

"With all my heart." I have said too much, but it has been said. As for my boyfriend now, I am sorry, hon. I do love you, but....I do love you, very much. That was it. The conversation had to stop.

"I'm tired and I'm going to bed."

O.K. Thanks for talking to me. I knew you would be honest." He sounded so smug. Damn him. He knew what I would say before he even dialed my number. I was livid

"Good night."

"Good night."

I hung up the phone and turned out the light. the outside of my body died as soon as I hit the bed, but way down deep inside my chest, a phoenix flapped its wings. I grabbed a picture of my current boyfriend, and fell into slumber with my warm and rosy-cheeked face pressed against the cold glass frame: an unfeeling object that separated us.

Ring. Ring.

"It's me again. Did I wake you?" As he laughed into the phone, I knew that he already knew the answer.

"Yes, you did. I am very tired and I need to go to sleep, okay?"

"Okay. I'll call you tomorrow." Bile rose in my throat and threatened to drown the phoenix.

"Fine. Good night."

"Good night."

The receiver never touched the phone until the next morning. I tapped the button on the phone to break the connection, then placed the receiver next to the phone on the floor. I laid awake for a long time listening to the dial tone, then the warning sound that tells you to return the receiver to the phone, then nothing. I ended the call, but just couldn't bring myself to hang up the phone.

I rolled over and tried to get back to sleep. This time, the glass of the picture frame that I held onto for dear life was warm, and wet. It never dried.

Memories

Paul Stanley

Forget to remember
what happened last December
Try to remember where you've been
avoid recollections caving in

Self-induced memory lapse
all emotions begin to collapse
Thoughts shrink together suddenly
the memory begs to be free

The pressure mounts upon your brain
denial weakens from the strain
Urgent demands in your mind
you search but cannot find

Uncertainty causes tension
the answer evades the question
A force is exerting hostility
the memory begs to be free

Fear of what you may discover
memories become difficult to recover
You only remember what you choose
the memories become easier to lose

Memories that you will not trust
remember ~~only~~ what you must
Fellings without a sense of liberty
the memory begs to be free.

Nietzsche and the Transcendence of Socrates

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To write of Socrates and Nietzsche, one must first address the Apollonian and the Dionysian. That is to say the Mythos and the Logos. Art for Nietzsche is man's highest task, his crowning achievement, and his true metaphysical activity. Art defines culture, and for Nietzsche, a culture without art is a decadent culture. A man in this culture cannot rise and aspire to be more than himself, to be the *super-man*.

The significance of Greek art lays in the two fundamental principles of the Apollonian and the Dionysian. Although there is a most certain duality, the highest most austere art reaches its zenith with the reconciliation of these forms.

Apollo on the one hand is the god of order, structure, rigidity. As an example of this Nietzsche uses the Doric order. Although Doric art is majestic, it is none the less rigid and structured and therefore far from being the highest achievement of Greek art. The Apollonian drive manifests itself in the dreams of men. In dreaming, men order experience to their liking, delighting in the beautiful appearances. The desire for men to have order, to draw clear, distinct lines, brings about their individuation. This individuation though is in complete opposition to the underlying forces of nature. This underlying chaos, this primal unity is the Dionysian drive.

Through the Dionysian drive man is reminded of himself and his origins in nature. As order and structure are elements of Apollo, the Dionysian represents the opposite. Through individuation men are severed from nature, alienated from it. Intoxication and revelry cause men to lose their individuality, so that nature in a sense, celebrates a reconciliation. A man that

is seized by the orgiastic power of Dionysus realizes that *he* is the artwork of nature. Nietzsche refers to life and nature as being synonymous. Thus the individual serves nature by procreating and perpetuating the species. For man, art is the consent that life is worth living a consent of his condition, the true blue song of *living*.

For Nietzsche, the Apollonian order comes from a Dionysian base. One cannot reach the highest art without the reconciliation of the two. By themselves, both will fail; "Indeed, he (the Greeks) had to recognize even more than this: despite all its beauty and moderation, his entire existence rested on a hidden substratum of suffering and of knowledge, which was again revealed to him by the Dionysian. And lo! Apollo could not live without Dionysus! The 'titanic' and the 'barbaric' were the in the last analysis as necessary as the Apollonian (BOT 967)." The highest achievement of this reconciliation was the Attic Tragedy of the Greeks.

Tragedy, for Nietzsche, evolved from the lyric poet or musician such as Archilochus. Music is an expression of the Dionysian. It is the opposite of the Doric order of Apollo. Music is non-visual and non-conceptual and an expression of the primal unity. Music is the seed from which tragedy will spring forth, specifically the tragic chorus. Tragedy is then blending or alchemy of Apollo and Dionysus. Apollo represents the form, such as dialog and action, and Dionysus represents the content, the primal unity, the unconcealing of being, the acknowledgement of eternal suffering. The ideal example of the tragic character is Sophocles's Oedipus. The dialogus of Oedipus Rex appears graceful, flowing, and elegant,

providing a blanket that covers the unexpected fate of Oedipus; for underneath this Apollonian quality there is the desperate plight and unexpected ordeal of Oedipus which *requires* this Apollonian veil to protect the audience against this horrible unraveling of events. For Nietzsche, the Dionysian element seems far more important. Nietzsche speaks constantly of Dionysian wisdom and rarely if ever of Apollonian wisdom. Thus tragedy is the expression of Dionysian wisdom and for Nietzsche, Dionysian wisdom is the most profound wisdom. A culture is defined by its aesthetic and the state is merely the outline or form it takes, (this form/outline is the Apollonian). Art by itself has the ability to make life bearable in the face of the cruelty and terror of nature: "Art saves him, and through art life saves him — for herself (BOT 984)." The high art of the tragedy entered its death throes with Euripides.

Euripides admitted that he did not understand tragedy although he considered it the root of all enjoyment. Critical of himself and other tragic authors, Euripides considered the tragedy of his peers as deceptive, unstructured and raising doubts as to their solutions of ethical questions. In his own tragedies, Euripides tries to make a synthesis of his characters and his audience by making the characters common and much more realistic than his peers. Nietzsche believed that in doing this, Euripides separated the Dionysian from the Apollonian; the Greeks had nothing more to strive for, nothing more to aspire to. The affirmation of man's condition that was once the essence the Dionysus was destroyed. Nietzsche called it suicide, and this suicide was aided by the spectator of Euripides:

"Dionysus had already been scared from the tragic stage; he had been scared by a demonic power speaking through Euripides. For even Euripides was, in a sense, only a mask: the deity that spoke through him was neither Dionysus nor Apollo. It was an altogether new born

demon. And it was called Socrates."

Nietzsche, in The Birth of Tragedy, introduces us to Socrates, not as man but as a divinity, and he also refers to the teachings of Socrates as Socratism. He does this so that people will think of Socrates not only as an historical figure but as a symbolic movement, the movement being the downfall of the Greeks. When Euripides expelled the Dionysian from his plays, the tragedy no longer existed. Neither were his plays structured totally after the Apollonian. Instead, his plays were to take on the same characteristics as the dialogues of Plato, that of cool insight and a rationalistic principle, the principle that everything must be intelligible in order to be beautiful. This Nietzsche calls 'aesthetic Socratism.'

Nietzsche refutes the idea of Euripides plays that are solely on consciousness and wisdom. He believes that wisdom and consciousness destroy intuition. Although Nietzsche does rank men according to wisdom, he does not believe that wisdom is the same as knowing. Plato on the other hand does believe that wisdom and knowledge are the same thing. Plato maintains that men who do not grasp wisdom and knowledge, such as poets, orators, artisans are merely acting from instinct and therefore ignorant. For example, in Plato's Apology Socrates attempts to explain the ignorance of poets; "I am ashamed to tell you the truth, my friends, but I must say it. Almost anyone of the bystanders could have talked about the works of these poets better than the poets themselves. So I soon found that it is not by wisdom that the poets create their works, but by a certain innate power and by inspiration, like soothsayers and prophets who may say many fine things but who understand nothing of what they say (Apology p.8)."

Socrates believed that the dialectical method can secure certain knowledge, and that intuition should not be trusted. Socrates accepts

only the clear and distinct, only the non-contradictory. This theoretical view judges the world and its existence. It does so because it sees the world as understandable and conquerable which in turn allows it to be "corrected". Once again this is what Nietzsche calls 'aesthetic Socratism', which is characterized by a theoretical, dialectical, inartistic evaluation of art. For Nietzsche this method, and the person who employs it, does not understand the art it investigates. Socrates' theory and reason are master and art is barely peripheral.

This is Nietzsche's major problem with Socrates. The irony is (and I will speak of this in a moment) that Socrates opposed tragedy out of instinct! Socrates believed that just the mere presence of instinct needed to be addressed and corrected. Because Socrates opposes his world of Greek art, especially tragedy, Nietzsche looks at aesthetic Socratism as a horror and the most questionable of movements of Greek antiquity. "Who is this that dares single-handed to disown the Greek genius, which is Homer, Pindar, and Aeschylus, as Phidias, as Pericles, as Pythia and Dionysus, as the deepest abyss and the highest height, compels our wondering admiration?" (BOT 340)

In contrast to Socrates, Nietzsche believed that it is instinct that is the driving force and creative power; "Whereas in all productive men it is instinct that is the creatively affirmative force, and consciousness that acts critically and dissuasively; with Socrates it is instinct that becomes criticism, and consciousness that becomes creator — a perfect monstrosity per defectum (BOT 404)!" Nietzsche also professes, that Socrates' opposition to tragedy is, ironically, instinctual, and that Socrates cannot recognize this instinct. Because Socrates cannot recognize this instinct (which Nietzsche calls his 'logical drive'), he is incapable of turning it against himself. Instead he releases his ethical and moral monsoon on the world in the form of aesthetic Socratism.

Socrates logical stance puts him in direct opposition to tragedy. Essentially this stance is one of optimism, and through his dialects, this optimism is celebrated at the conclusion of an argument. This optimism as a celebration of logic is a direct death blow to tragedy for Nietzsche.

In the last books of The Birth of Tragedy From the Spirit of Music, Nietzsche proposes that the rebirth of tragedy must happen from the spirit of music. The irony of Nietzsche's formulation though is that this rebirth has to include Socratism or the 'music-making' Socrates. The profound effect of Socrates teachings, which Nietzsche equates with science, logos etc. cannot be destroyed but must be *transcended*.

In Thus Spoke Zarathustra, Nietzsche proposes a character that differs tremendously to Socrates. Although it appears that Nietzsche's Zarathustra attacks Christianity and its morals, Nietzsche believes that this belief system had its origins with Socrates. If one looks at Zarathustra, one will see that he is a man full of experience. Unlike Socrates, who is only concerned with the city of Athens, Zarathustra professes that he has been around the world and seen the land of the future. Zarathustra is a man of many experiences that encompass mankind. By contrast, Nietzsche believed that Socrates, dwelling only in the city of Athens, makes him a man of limited and narrow experience. Socrates' home had been Athens all his life, while Zarathustra was a man without a single home or country. Thus Nietzsche believes that Zarathustra, a man of tremendous experience, is much better suited to pave the way for his transvaluation of values, the same values that Socrates extolled.

Because there may be objections to the claim that Zarathustra is a man of more experience, I think it is important to quickly define who Zarathustra might be. The most obvious answer would be that Zarathustra is Nietzsche himself. Nietzsche, in letters to his friends

(specifically Overbeck), explicated that Zarathustra is "an image of my being (Dannhauser 241)." It can also be said that Zarathustra isn't Nietzsche himself, but that it was his self-idealization.

I think at this point, it is particularly interesting to contrast Zarathustra and Socrates in relation to Plato's cave. In The Republic, the sun is recognized to be the source of all things that men have seen. Plato states, "And after that he would already be in a position to conclude about it that this is the source of the seasons and the years, and is the steward of all things in the visible place, and is in a certain way the cause of all those things he and his companions had been seeing (The Republic 516b-c)." For Plato, the sun is something that men look up to and maybe understand, but for Zarathustra, the sun is an equal. While Socrates speaks of the sun that remains forever above him, Zarathustra speaks *to* the sun, which comes *up* to him in his cave. Thus while there is the sun above Socrates, there is nothing above Zarathustra except possibly his self which he has yet to embody. Nietzsche believed that Socrates was a man of limited and narrow horizons; horizons that Socrates created, and ones that he had no desire to overcome.

In the *Phaedo*, it is implied that Socrates possesses great wisdom; "Such was the end, Echechrates, of our friend, who was as we may say, of all those of his time whom we have known, the best and wisest and most righteous man (Phaedo 118a)." Though this wisdom is well deserved, it mainly states that Socrates was perhaps the wisest man of his time and is only wise because he recognizes his ignorance. He never calls himself a wise man but instead a philosopher — a lover of wisdom. Zarathustra on the other hand, is not a philosopher and never calls himself this. He states that he is "weary from his wisdom." Nietzsche's Zarathustra, unlike Socrates, suffers from too much wisdom.

Thus for Nietzsche, Socrates is the

prelude to destruction. The moral system, such as Socrates's search for justice, which stem from cool analysis is decadent, and Nietzsche holds Socrates to be the man responsible. The height of Greek culture that found expression with the pre-Socratics such as Heraclitus, is now crumbling. Man's affirmation of nature, art, has now separated itself from man out of instinct. In its place is the delusion of science and morality. Man does not need, or worse yet, does not desire to find himself. He does not desire to ask the most profound questions; Where do I come from?, Where am I going?, How long have I got? All that is desired is comfort.

When Nietzsche attacks Socrates, some of the most profound questions arise: Why truth?, Why science? Why philosophy? To address these questions, there is no doubt that the historical Socrates (and Plato) play a part. For Nietzsche, Socrates was a formidable opponent. He always said that everywhere he turned he saw Socrates! As stated before, Nietzsche saw Socrates, not only as a philosopher, but as an historical movement that in itself demanded admiration. Although there is a definite sarcasm, I believe that there is also a genuine feeling of homage if not 'awe' when Nietzsche says that Socrates is a great man, for any man who opposes him [Nietzsche], is a worthy opponent.

I believe that Nietzsche's view of Socrates is not only justifiable but necessary. One might ask, "Is it fair?" Considering what seems to be sacrificed, and that is man's true aspirations for greatness, *anybody* is fair game.

I feel that Socrates represents the beginning of a limited achievement for the potential of man. When I say Socrates, I mean more than just the man, but the historical Socrates, the aesthetic Socratism, the Socrates with the logical drive. Socrates, because he never left Athens, was bound to limited horizons. The same questions that he unleashed on the people of Athens were the same questions that he could

never answer himself. The walls that surrounded Athens were more than physical. When Socrates denied tragedy, he negated even the happiest life on earth. Tragedy spoke to the heart and gave the great gift of understanding one's unity in all things, and one's inevitable destruction. It was the mirror of man, a mirror that, although not totally destroyed by Socrates, started with his crack. Socrates and Plato's refutation of tragedy and poetry of certain types, and their questioning stance, was and is, a delusion. Science cannot reveal truth, but is merely a veil. Science may answer what is, but never the more important question, why? Although Socrates himself was not in essence a scientist, he was, in a sense, a hinge, and when this door, this great vault of delusion opened, Eros, poises ... passion escaped without a whisper. The danger and secrets that are reflected in man's tragicart, in *man*, actively gave way to comfort, to blindness, to a life that was not fully, truly examined. All one has to do is look around.

The pre-Socratics on the other hand, knew how to live, knew how to wrench the sweet juices from nature. Philosophers like Heraclitus, had a burning vision which bypasses the empirical, scientific verification that is so dearly treasured today as 'truth.' Heraclitus does not deal with an ethical and moral philosophy, but sees man as free from any constraint; free from the logos which is merely another part of nature like man himself, who is essentially irrational. Like Heraclitus, man is not privileged in nature. Heraclitus does more than describe the world through his cosmology of fire, but affirms the absurdity of existence by transfiguring it. He achieves it with the aplomb which I think Socrates lacks.

Also lacking in Socrates is *Eros*. It is a kind of *Eros* that sees a certain sexual union with man and nature. I believe this lack of *Eros* was due to Socrates' negation of even the happiest life on earth. In Plato's Phaedo, Socrates,

after drinking the poison, says, "Crito, we owe Asclepius a rooster. Please see that he gets it (Phaedo 118a)." It was a common practice to sacrifice a rooster to Asclepius, the god of healing, when one had recovered from illness. In this case, Socrates' illness is *life*.

Socrates himself was said never to succumb to the mood of his gatherings. In Plato's Symposium it states, "Socrates, having put the two poets to sleep, got up and left, and Aristodemus said he followed him as was his habit. He said Socrates went to the Lyceum and took a bath, spent the day as he spent every other, and towards evening, he said, went home to bed (Symposium 223d)." Also, Socrates, and Plato for that matter, claimed the poets to be dangerous. Plato, after meeting Socrates, threw his poems and tragedies away! Given Plato's outstanding ability to write, I often wonder what great words would have echoed forth through the centuries! But the spiritual ambiguity of art, its fascination with *Eros*, with deep roots in the unconscious were troublesome to Plato. What he did not like he banned from his 'ideal' city. More disturbing to Plato was the dramatist who could influence and possess thousands of people with their plays. Plato did not hesitate to warn the people around him: "Art gives magical-induced satisfactions to the lower part of the soul, and defaces beauty by mixing it with personal sorcery." The aesthetics of Plato's state consisted of pure colors, simple, un-artistic melodies and rhythms, "certain straightforward kinds of military music ..." Plato's ideal city is for the few: "Don't you see that all these are in your city too, and that there the desires in the common many are, mastered by the desires and the prudence in the more decent few (Republic 431d)?" But if this is the few, in this city that is purged of desire, I will abstain. I will stay in the cave with the poets and the dramatists. I will go to the tavern with Prince Henry, where the Falstaffs are and press the flesh.

We have all inherited two very separate

traditions, not the Judeo-Christian but the Apollonian and Dionysiac. Right now the scales are tipped in the favor of comfort, in favor of nihilism. People are frightened of the word Dionysus. They fear it like Thebes feared it in Euripedes great tragedy. For them, it is best left unattended and denied. We are so entrenched in the Western Civilization centralized mind set of the 'decent citizen', the rational and moral, that we do not even *recognize* it.

We need new songs played on new wind pipes. Songs that compel us to look at ourselves more closely, not as far as what we have achieved or possess, but as affirming our central recurrence in a world of total uncertainty. The appeal of the pre-Socratics seems so enticing. A contemporary poet put it this way:

Lets reinvent the Gods of all the Myths
of the Ages
Celebrate symbols from deep elder forests.
Have we forgotten the lessons
of the ancient wars?
We need great golden copulations. (JDM)

In conclusion, although I admire Socrates and Plato tremendously, I feel that Nietzsche's stance is justified. I do think that Nietzsche is sometimes overbearing, but I think he feels mankind is not living up to its true potential, not living the "fully examined life" and I think this disturbs if not saddens him deeply.

Hitherto, there have been a thousand goals,
for there have been a thousand peoples.
Only fetters are still lacking for these thousand
necks, the one goal is still lacking.
Yet tell me, my brothers: if a goal for
humanity is still lacking, is there not
still lacking — humanity itself?
(Zar. p.1, Of the Thousand and One Goals)

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Untitled

Kim Miller

The poet is a dreamer
and the dreamer a poet.
Jump down from that fence
and dance madly on the moon.
The earth is a unique sphere
of energy wild in a
static universe.
Fly now through midnight skies
and swim perfectly with the stars.
The philosophers mind is limited,
but mine is not - come - let's explore ...

Mommy

Heather Sullivan

I'm sitting here right now with the music turned up loud, trying to block out the thoughts that are going through my head. Billy Joel is trying so hard to make all the feelings go away, but no matter how loud I turn up the music — the cacophony in my mind is still louder . beating . banging . screaming . Making me face the possible truth, trying to get me to see that the future may hold one of my darkest fears ever.

Can I ask you a question, and please answer it if you would, because I'm losing a lot of sleep and the room has been closing in on me for several nights. What is the definition of a woman, can I ask you that? What makes a woman in your mind's eye? I need an answer so I can feel better. If you tell me what I'm afraid you'll say, then I can at least get the popular consensus. Right now, all I have is what my tired mind is telling me.

If a woman (perhaps I should put that in quotation marks, because we have not yet determined whether said woman could actually be considered a woman yet), for the sake of argument, and saving space in this stanza, let's say that she really is a woman. She has all of the other attributes that are considered womanly, so she might as well remain a woman, for now, a true blue female, in the eyes of her culture.

If a woman never has that sweet, exciting chance to be called "mommy", does that make her less of a woman? Suppose that she really wants to be called "mommy", and she may not have any control over her chances. It's not like she could forget to take the pill for a couple days, or that she could meet some stranger on the road and coax him into a little fun. Suppose that she might have no control

over the situation at all.

Take a look at your body and imagine it possibly betraying you for the first time in your life. Look down at your breasts, your heart, your feet; each of these parts has probably gotten you in trouble at one point before — the shirt was too tight for the rules in junior high, you fell for that guy you shouldn't have, or you tripped into a really large display in the supermarket because you weren't looking.

The problem is the part that might be betraying you, you can't control at all and you can't even imagine. Suppose there might be this wild errant gene that might not work when it is supposed to, and so you could end up a vegetable at an age when most women are finally getting the chance to show how good they really are in their profession. And you could end up forgetting everything that has ever meant a damn to you.

Suppose if it happens the way that it could, you have been told to not have any children, because you would be passing down death to a small frame that would never really understand how you could be so selfish, just because you wanted to sweat and bleed and push and swear until you felt that head and the body come out into the light of day. You needed to feel whole and complete, so you just did it.

Then where are you? Where do you stand in this crazy, weird world in which we live? You could have a child that comes to hate you, or you could hate yourself and then they get the pleasure of watching you calmly drift off into the oblivion and oneness of becoming a piece of broccoli. Or you and the child could be fine. Does anyone really get to win in this equation, if it follows the pattern of what could

happen to you?

Let's add something else to the problem. Suppose that the man you have attached yourself to really loves kids. You see his tears and you watch him play with the little ones that you might never have, and you already have names picked out for what would have been the first few. He cries and tells you not to worry, he will be fine, but every time you want to tell him the pain, you don't because you remember his tears.

Add to it that he tells you he will adjust, and that all he really wants is to be with you for the rest of your life, but remember not to remind him that the rest of your life might only be another twenty years. Try to forget all those conversations that you had discussing the seventy blissful years you were going to have together, because you need to be prepared in case the worst does happen to you and him.

So, you haven't told me yet. Is a woman really a woman in every sense of the word, if she never hears the word "mommy" directed at her, if she never kisses a booboo, is she never gets to pull the covers back in place because the little one sleeps exactly like she does — all over the place. Tell me please, because I really need to know your opinion before I try in vain to sleep tonight, like I've tried for the last couple of weeks.

Meanwhile, Billy drones on in my ears, and I try to block out the pain of your answer, because I know that no matter what you tell me I know how I will feel. I will not be complete or whole. There will always be a little hole, a crevasse where there should be a small body leaning in for comfort and support, a little body that brings me their first art project and their skinned knees, a little body that calls me "mommy."

Untitled

Kim Miller

I gave you a feather that I had
found that day in the woods.
Upstairs in your incense apartment
filled with sagacity and freedom and
nature, I gave to you a simple token
of my love.

And you rose from your spot of
meditation to greet me and embrace
me. Together we blessed the feather
and then we danced in gypsy motion
to the lucid metered music that
filled the room.

And when we tired of dancing, we
collapsed hand in hand and dreamed
silently of flowers, and mornings,
and gardens in the country and
parties in the city, and birds with
lovely feathers ...

And upon waking I did follow you to
the kitchen that was so full of
evening and ambience, and we drank
sweet vanilla coffee from pastel
earthen mugs talking tenderly in
candlelight language.

Then in new born morning light you
looked out across the universe and
with feather in hand took that
irrevocable first step into final
flight. I am still learning to learn
to walk — and I may never fly.

An Extended Thought

Kim Miller

A millennium of decades brings about certain corrupt changes in the egalitarian societies of verbose wombats, thus demonstrating the evolution of a singularly two dimensional goddess who, at will, can inhale juxtapositions of tailored shirts and nakedness — spitting back the leathery earlobes of unfinished scholars and the remains of one partly digested paradoxical plum.



Untitled

Kim Miller

Old man, old man, you
have infected me with
your raving hippie
disease. You made love to
mind unprotected —
subsequently painting my
soul opaque with thorny
shades of wisdom.

Revolution — the mutual
child of our mental union
grows within me like a
great angelic beast
teething on my
uncertainty.

And you who abandoned
your wallet — swearing in
great gushes that there
was no tax on autonomy —
yes you with wild ideals
and devotion to moon and
stars and earth — you are
a wise man — my wise
man.

You did not warn me about
this overwhelming
appetite for Freedom.
These rattling pangs of
desire to change a world
that can only change
itself.

A Page of Chuck Bennett

No. 3

I HAVE GLIDED FOR SO LONG THAT I
FORGET
THE TOUCH OF THE GROUND OR THE
SCENT OF WORK
NEVER PREPARED MYSELF I NEVER GOT
SET
I HAVE EATEN WITH GOLDEN KNIFE
AND FORK
MY GOOD FORTUNE WAS A PAPER
AIRPLANE
ONLY TO BE MISLED TO THE DRAWING
BOARD
I FELT EMPTY THERE WAS NOTHING TO
GAIN
AND THINKING OF HARD TIMES TO BE
ENDURED.
BUT AS I SAT IN THAT BACK ROOM I
THOUGHT
CAN I LIVE AS THEY DO? SO CONFIDENT
I KNEW THAT WAY. IT'S JUST LIKE
BEING RETAUGHT
FROM INFANT TO ADULT BACK TO
INFANT
LIKE A SLAB OF CLAY I LIE ON THE
WHEEL
SIMPLY SAYING, "HOW DO YOU THINK
IT MAKES ME FEEL?"

No. 12

Open your eyes. Don't you see my soul?
There, on the ground, my soul.
Don't you see my soul?
That is not your soul my dear boy.
That is your shadow.
Shadow? What is that?
Oh a shadow, you know a shadow
is but an outline of yourself,
a reflection of your self
"oh," said the boy. "so do you see my soul
now?"

No. 5

WHEN IN THE FACE OF TOMORROW I
WILL NOT TURN
NOR LINGER IN THE LIGHT OF YESTER-
DAY.
I SHALL LIVE AND STAY FOR THIS MO-
MENT THEN THE NEXT.
ON THIS MOMENT I ENVISION MYSELF
ON A BOLD CONQUEST
WORKING IN HARMONY WITH THE
HAND, EYE, CANVAS, AND BRUSH.
LIKE FOUR FINELY TUNED INSTRU-
MENTS PLAYING THE GREATEST
SYMPHONY.
ALL UNDER THE CONDUCTION OF
MY MIND.
FEEL THE RHYTHM. FEEL THE PATTERN
FEEL THE METER. FEEL THE BEAT OF
MY HEART.
YOU DO NOT HAVE TO HEAR WHAT I
SAY OR
SEE WHAT I PAINT.
SIMPLY SAY I FEEL WHAT HE MEANS.

No. 8

Damn to be
Damned to do what is set forth.
Damned to say what you taught me.
Let me think... LET ME THINK.
Must I follow your lead; must I?
Let me be me.
You have wisdom beyond your yearbook.
I know. You told me. Open your eyes
in these uncertain times.
Free the pigeons in those
cold cages on the roof top. They did not
harm you. Let them go.
Will they return? I do not know.
They are free now, only they can decide.

Socrates and the Utility of Dreams

Todd M. Shaffer
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Heraclitus, in his fragment number 244 states that: "The lord whose oracle is in Delphi neither speaks out nor conceals, but gives a sign." (1) In the *Apology*, Socrates learns that he is considered by the Delphic oracle to be the wisest of men. This drives him to begin an exhaustive search for a man who is wiser than he. (2) The ambiguous nature of the oracle's revelations and the constant striving for meaning which they provoke is similar to what will be examined in this paper, namely the role of dreams in a number of the Platonic dialogues with an emphasis on the *Republic*.

In *The Birth of Tragedy*, Friedrich Nietzsche extols the importance of dreams. Dreams come as gifts from the god Apollo. Through our dreams, Nietzsche says, "we enjoy an immediate apprehension of form." (3) We also derive both pleasure and a sense of healing from the dreams. The dreams give one a contrasting element to the "imperfectly understood waking reality" (4) that one experiences each day. But as Nietzsche says, although we sometimes experience dreams with vivid intensity, there is what he calls a "residual sense that they are illusions." (5) Therefore though the dreams at times seem to be nearly prophetic, it is important to realize that they are in fact images in themselves, and ambiguous ones at that. Nietzsche and Socrates both urge us to question them and give them a context so that we can derive some meaning from them. Nietzsche reiterates the necessary nature of the dreams in this passage, where he states:

That which we experience in dreams, if we experience it often, is in the end just as much a part of the total economy of our soul as is anything we 'really' experience... (6)

Throughout his life Socrates, as portrayed in the Platonic dialogues, held dreams in high esteem. Rather than merely glorifying them as superficial images as he criticized the poets for doing, the philosopher Socrates chose to use his dreams and their images as guides in both his life and his speeches. He made use of the revealing and ambiguous imagery of dreams in the explanation of ideas to his listeners. Often the images of the dreams, Socrates offers, do more to clarify an idea than the rational and logical progression of his argument. It is appropriate now to cite a few examples of Socrates' reliance upon and reverence towards the imagery of dreams in both the *Republic* and other dialogues.

In the *Crito*, Socrates shows his reliance upon the soothsaying nature of his dreams. While in prison awaiting his death a dream occurs to Socrates in which a fair woman appears to him and offers him a line of poetry from Homer. Socrates determines from this dream that he is not to die for another three days. There is another important and revealing image that can be derived from this exchange between Socrates and Crito. But first we must examine the passage:

Soc. There appeared to me the likeness of a woman, fair and comely, clothed in bright raiment, who called to me and said: O Socrates, The third day hence to fertile Phthia shalt thou go.

Crito. What a singular dream, Socrates!

Soc. There can be no doubt about the meaning, Crito, I think. (7)

Therefore the most remarkable thing that one is shown in this passage of the *Crito* is not

primarily the fact that Socrates relied on the prophetic sense of dreams, but instead the fact that Socrates doubts himself ever so slightly in the interpretation of his dream. This can be seen as symbolic of Socrates' entire life and his quest to understand the ambiguity of existence. We, as mortals, are given an allotted amount of time here within this reality (Socrates' time in prison). Images, both real and dreamed are given to us. As philosophers and human beings we may, or may not interpret those dreams or those realities correctly. What Socrates as a philosopher represents is an attempt to see the images, both real and imagined, for what they are and attempting what he sees as the best interpretation.

An instance in the Republic in which a similar dream interpretation is presented comes at 414d:

I shall speak-and yet, I don't know what I'll use for daring or speeches in telling it-and I'll attempt to persuade first the rulers and the soldiers, then the rest of the city, that the rearing and education we gave them were like dreams; they only thought they were undergoing all that was happening to them... (8)

This passage involves Socrates' proposal of the noble lie as a means to tie the guardians to the land in which they live. Symbolically, this can be representative of the entire scope of human learning. First everything we learn can be seen as a dream that is given to us for our individual interpretation. And secondly, in a sense we must build on the knowledge we are given in the beginning in our quest for greater understanding. We are much like the captives in the cave, who without memory of their reliance upon primitive images, can never gain a sense of becoming enlightened.

Another example of Socrates' admittance of his possible fallibility when it comes to the interpretation of dreams occurs in the

Phaedo. Socrates recalls to Cebes a dream that he has had all throughout his life. In the dream he says that he is told in one way or another to "cultivate and make music." (9) Socrates initially interpreted this dream to be urging him to follow the path he has chosen, namely the pursuit of philosophy. But at the end of his life he admits that he may have been wrong.

The dream was bidding me do what I was already doing, in the same way that the competitor in a race is bidden by the spectators to run when he is already running. But I was not certain of this; for the dream might have meant music in the popular sense of the word, and being under sentence of death, and the festival [for the god of dreams, Apollo] giving me respite, I thought that it would be safer for me to satisfy the scruple, and, in obedience to the dream to compose a few verses before I departed. (10)

On the surface it seems that this is just another example of Socrates' feelings of doubt late in his life towards the interpretation of his dreams. But there is a more symbolic, underlying meaning to this passage when taken in the proper context. In one sense Socrates is telling us here that even in the pursuit of philosophy it is possible to spend your entire life guided by a misinterpretation. He is warning that one should not become stagnant and stubborn in the interpretation of dreams or any other images, but that one should remain open to new ideas concerning our old interpretations. This point can be strengthened by this example from 443 b in the Republic where Socrates says to Glaucon:

Then that dream of ours has reached its perfect fulfillment. I mean our saying that we suspected that straight from the beginning of the city's founding, through some god, we probably hit upon an origin and model for justice. (11)

Socrates seems to be speaking with a certain satisfaction at the attainment of his perfect city in speech. It is ironic that his interpretation of this dream city comes under attack in only two pages. At the outset of Book V his dream is criticized, by Polemarchus through Adeimantus for not including women and children. Socrates must here offer a new beginning and a new interpretation of his dream.

This ability to choose between interpretations of a dream is what Socrates says sets the philosopher apart from the man of tyrannic nature. He says in the *Republic*, at 572b:

What we wish to recognize is the following: surely some terrible, savage, and lawless form of desires is in every man, even in some of us who seem to be ever so measured. And surely this becomes plain in dreams. (12)

Socrates is saying in this passage that there is a thin line separating the tyrant and the philosopher. This line can best be shown with the image of a dream. The tyrant dreams, as Socrates says in Book IX, of "attempting intercourse, as it supposes, with a mother or with anyone else at all-human beings, gods, and beasts, or attempting any foul murder at all ... " (13) The philosopher may also have dreams of this nature. The difference between the two is that the tyrant chooses not to wake up. As Socrates says at 574 e: "...what he had rarely been in dreams, he became continuously while awake." (14) Therefore this is an example of the misinterpretation of dreams and the close proximity between philosopher and tyrant.

The final example of Socrates' reliance upon dream imagery in dialogues other than the *Republic* comes from *Theaetetus*. In this dialogue Socrates and the young Theaetetus discuss the resemblance between a dreaming state and the waking state. Strengthening the idea of Socrates' reliance on dreams he tells Theaetetus:

You see, then, that a doubt about the reality of sense is easily raised, since there may even be a doubt whether we are awake or in a dream. And as our time is equally divided between sleeping and waking,...during one half of our lives we affirm the truth of the one, and, during the other half, of the other; and are equally confident of both. (15)

In this selection Socrates is telling us that dream and reality exist as equals. Both speak to us with the use of images. The images of both are necessities which as Nietzsche says, "make life possible and worth living" (16).

The remaining portion of this examination of the utility of dreams as seen by Socrates will focus upon an image that he offers Adeimantus in Book IX. It is an extremely important image when applied to the context of the entire *Republic*. By using as a framework many of the other images and situations of the book gain in richness of meaning.

At the outset of Book IX, Socrates gives Adeimantus an image of a philosopher preparing for sleep. This "healthy and moderate" (17) man readies himself for his rest by first awakening what Socrates considers the calculating portion of the soul. He then goes on to satisfy and soothe the other parts of the soul, namely the desiring and the spirited portions. This is not done dogmatically with the calculating portion overpowering the other aspects into servitude.

There must be a kind of consensus, a harmony of the three, in order to allow for philosophy to be present. Disaster would accompany a situation in which one of the three were to be favored so strongly as to overwhelm the other two. Socrates presents just such a situation, not only in terms of one portion of the soul: he gives an intimation of what all three would be like separately.

Book I of the *Republic*, is symbolic of

Socrates' attempts to awaken the calculating portion of the soul, while dealing thoughtfully with the other two parts. Book I shows the personification of the three parts of the soul and the arguments that each portion rely upon. Socrates refutation of the arguments of first Cephalus and the symbolic nature of Socrates taking over as "head" of the household is a representation of the purely calculating soul. The spirit is represented by Polemarchus, heir to Cephalus' arguments. And finally, Thrasymachus becomes the personification of the beastly desires that wish to convince us that they are the truth.

In Cephalus Socrates sees the loss of bodily pleasures and the gain of monetary wealth. Socrates questions him on his seemingly indifferent attitude towards the gain of his wealth, when he considers himself to be between his father and his grandfather in money-making. Socrates also points out the fact that money-making, for Cephalus, is not a love for him. Socrates likens the relationship of maker to money to the relationship between a father and a son. This could possibly represent the idea that Cephalus who is well past the age of having any more children, fails to give birth to philosophy. He fails to philosophize because philosophy is initiated by a love, an eros; of which Cephalus has none.

The passage in Book IX states that the calculating part is left by itself:

...to consider and to long for the perception of something that it doesn't know, either something that has been, or is or is going to be ... (18)

We must be reminded that this occurs only after the other two parts of the soul are addressed and their needs are met. Cephalus denies these needs and is happy to be free from their drives. In Cephalus all we have is a longing for wealth and the appearance of justice so that he won't have to suffer after death in Hades. This point is reiterated by Adeiman-

tus later in Book II when he says that the man who "calculates" (19) fears the gods and aims at gaining the appearance of justice.

With Socrates' refutation of Cephalus' arguments we see the failure of the purely calculating soul. Socrates allows Cephalus to return to his ceremonies where he immediately forgets anything Socrates may have taught him. Socrates engages in a continuation of the argument with the seemingly pious man's son Polemarchus.

And so the representative of the spirited portion of the soul, Polemarchus takes over for his father. He is next in line to the inheritance as he points out to his father. He takes a portion of what his father left him in the way of argument and decides that justice is helping friends while doing harm to one's enemies. Socrates offers a number of arguments against this idea. First of all, one may be deceived as to who their friends are. Secondly, one who is seen as an unjust enemy is made more unjust by being harmed. And finally, Socrates concludes that it is never the place of a just man to harm anyone, whether they are enemies or not.

From this exchange it can be seen that Socrates had little difficulty dealing with the spirited portion of the soul. We see that it arises from the calculating part like a son from a father. This shows the close "kinship" of the portions of the soul. As was stated earlier, Cephalus is seen as the calculating part of the soul, and Socrates not only refutes his arguments; he also takes the place of Cephalus as the new head of the household. At the end of his exchange with Polemarchus he asks

Polemarchus to be his ally in future battles. A strong similarity exists between this passage and the one from Book IV where Socrates says:

Isn't it proper for the calculating part to rule, since it is wise and has forethought about all of the soul, and for the spirited part to be obedient to it and its ally? (20)

Thrasymachus bursts onto the scene after having been restrained too long. He had formerly been "hunched up like a wild beast." (21) The final pages of Book I are Socrates' attempts to tame this wild beast of desire and his three arguments. Thrasymachus represents the mythological figure Cerberus who with his three vicious heads guarded the river Styx in mythology. The descriptions of Thrasymachus always include a reference to an animal, whether it be a wild beast or a wolf. Even the very nature of his arguments deal with "strength." The three arguments of Thrasymachus are: (1) justice is the advantage of the stronger; (2) injustice is stronger than justice; (3) justice is for the advantage of the artist.

Socrates teaches Thrasymachus that justice is a necessity to any kind of well-lived life. And by showing Thrasymachus that justice is indeed a virtue in itself, Socrates leads Thrasymachus to realize that injustice is the nature of an unhealthy soul and justice is health and well-being to that soul.

And just like he does to Cephalus and Polemarchus, Socrates refutes the arguments of the rhetorician Thrasymachus. He finally claims that it is only because Thrasymachus has decided to go easy on him that he wins the argument.

The image of the many-headed beast of desire comes into play again at the end of Book IX of the dialogue, Socrates says to Glaucon:

Well, then mold a single idea for a many-colored, many-headed beast that has a ring of heads of tame and savage beasts and can change them and can change them and make all of them grow from itself. (22)

And so as he did before Socrates replaces this single idea with himself as the alternative. Socrates now stands at the head of Cephalus' household, having replaced the purely singular aspects of each part of the soul.

He has discussed and refuted all of the incorrect opinions that Cephalus, Polemarchus, and Thrasymachus have given him.

As Book II opens, Socrates, who believed he will be now free from the arguments since he defeated all takers at Cephalus' home, realizes that both Glaucon and Adeimantus have been influenced by the other arguments. He realizes that he must take these "noble sons of Ariston" (23) and help them understand justice. Socrates does this through the long and complex journey comprised of the last nine books of the dialogue.

Book I sets the stage for the other books and if we follow the image of Book IX as a guide to interpreting the beginning of the dialogue we will see that it is true what Socrates says:

When a man has silenced these two latter forms and set the third-the one in which prudent thinking comes to be-in motion, and only then takes his rest, you know that in such a state he most lays hold of the truth and at this time the sights that are hostile to law show up least in his dreams. (24)

In conclusion, Socrates is again here speaking of the ambiguous nature of our two realities. Both are necessary, but it seems that one should not favor our waking reality over our dreaming one. In the Republic Socrates offers us a series of dream images that in the ultimate sense we are free to interpret as we wish. We are free to change our interpretations whenever we wish. As Socrates tells us in the Phaedo, it is always possible that we have mistakenly interpreted our dreams. This should not be seen as a discouragement to our interpreting the dreams. As human beings we are bound to our images whether imagined in a dream or sensed in "reality," therefore we must interpret these hints of truth in order to live.

No. 9

Chuck Bennett

In Time

In time there will be peace on earth.

And yes,

The Sun, our star, will slowly fizzle out
in time.

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